

**STATEMENT OF WILLIAM D. SHADDOX, ACTING ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR,  
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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, BEFORE THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON  
NATIONAL PARKS, FORESTS, AND PUBLIC LANDS, HOUSE COMMITTEE ON  
NATURAL RESOURCES, CONCERNING H.R. 442, A BILL TO AUTHORIZE THE  
SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR TO STUDY THE SUITABILITY AND  
FEASIBILITY OF DESIGNATING THE WOLF HOUSE, LOCATED IN NORFORK,  
ARKANSAS, AS A UNIT OF THE NATIONAL PARK SYSTEM**

**June 14, 2007**

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Mr. Chairman and members of the subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to present the Department of the Interior's views on H.R. 442, a bill to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to study the suitability and feasibility of designating the Wolf House, located in Norfork, Arkansas, as a unit of the National Park System.

The Department opposes H.R. 442. While the Wolf House is an impressive historical structure, it is not distinguished beyond that of many other historical log structures in cities all over the United States. It is currently operated by the Wolf House Memorial Foundation, Inc., (Foundation) with the backing of Baxter County, Arkansas. Even though the Wolf House has significance for the political history of the state of Arkansas, we believe it may be more suited for inclusion in the State Park system, either separately or as part of Bull Shoals-White River State Park. Finally, in a time of tight budgets and a refocusing on the core mission of the National Park Service, we believe that funding should be directed toward completing previously authorized studies.

H.R. 442 would authorize a study of the Wolf House, a two-story dogtrot log structure dating back to 1829. It is a relic of the Arkansas territorial period, the oldest territorial courthouse west

of the Mississippi River, and is located on Highway 5 in Norfork, Arkansas. It also would study the Wolf House property, several outbuildings, and portions of several city lots, all located within the city of Norfork. The study would be conducted in accordance with the criteria contained in Section 8(c) of Public Law 91-383 (16 U.S.C. 1a-5(c)). A report that includes the findings, conclusions, and recommendations for future management of the study area would be required to be transmitted by the Secretary to Congress no later than one year after enactment of this legislation. H.R. 442 states that the Wolf House is located in the city of Norfolk; the correct location is the city of Norfork.

The Wolf House became the property of the city of Norfork in the 1930s and was maintained and opened to the public by interested citizens who eventually formed the Foundation. The Wolf House was placed on the National Register of Historic Places on April 13, 1973. In the 1990s, controversies over management of the property led the Foundation to approach the Arkansas State Parks to assume responsibility for the property. They were told that the State Parks could not acquire new properties at the time. In 1999, the Foundation and the city of Norfork quit claimed their ownership of the property to Baxter County. At the same time, the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program acquired a historic preservation easement on the property.

Mr. Chairman, this concludes my prepared testimony. I would be pleased to answer any questions you or the subcommittee may have.